United Nations A/ES-10/657–S/2014/672

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
18 September 2014

Original: English

General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-ninth year

Identical letters dated 17 September 2014 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

I am compelled to draw your attention to the very fragile, unstable situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem — the Territory that constitutes the State of Palestine — resulting from the continued illegal policies and practices being pursued by Israel, the occupying Power, in grave breach of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and in blatant disregard of the appeals and demands of the international community.

While the suffering and hardships of the Palestinian people are growing exponentially under the impact of these illegal and punitive Israeli measures, the diminished prospects for peace are further dwindling. The consequences of inaction are far-reaching, especially in the light of the volatile situation on the ground and throughout the region, and require urgent attention and action by the international community to redress this ongoing injustice and to salvage the prospects for peace.

In the occupied Gaza Strip, almost the entirety of the Palestinian civilian population remains vulnerable and traumatized following the more than 50-day criminal Israeli military aggression, which wrought massive human devastation and physical destruction in all areas. This humanitarian disaster remains without remedy owing to the ongoing Israeli blockade restricting the sustained, regular and sufficient flow of desperately needed food, medical, fuel and other humanitarian assistance and the entry of construction materials necessary to begin the overwhelming task of reconstruction.

Moreover, the number of victims of the Israeli onslaught continues to rise, adding to the more than 2,150 Palestinians, including over 500 children and 250 women, killed by the Israeli occupying forces. Of the more than 11,000 Palestinians injured, civilians continue to die from their wounds owing to the severity of those wounds and/or the lack of life-saving medical treatment and basic medicines and supplies in Gaza. The latest victim, a young Palestinian, 22-year-old Anas Tayseer

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Al-Hinnawi, an engineering student, died of his wounds on Sunday, 14 September, in a hospital in Jordan.

The despair of the displaced families also remains immense, as more than 100,000 Palestinians have lost their homes as a result of the wanton, widespread destruction deliberately inflicted by the occupying Power across Gaza, where entire communities and neighbourhoods have been obliterated. Of the displaced, 65,000 people remain in schools of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), sheltering under desperate conditions and in need of continuous emergency humanitarian aid, including food, water and hygiene essentials.

While recognizing the extraordinary efforts of UNRWA and all the partner agencies of the United Nations system and international humanitarian organizations working under difficult circumstances to provide vital assistance to the Palestinian people, we reiterate our appeal for the urgent provision of greater humanitarian support, commensurate with the massive scope and scale of this disaster, and furthermore reiterate our call for the full lifting of the Israeli blockade and opening of the Gaza Strip border crossings. Both are imperative for alleviating the human suffering and for undertaking the reconstruction of homes, schools, hospitals and water, sanitation and electricity infrastructure, essential for recovery to begin from the unimaginable devastation so cruelly and systematically imposed by Israel, the occupying Power, in grave breach of international humanitarian law and in collective punishment, amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity.

In the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, the situation also remains precarious and tensions are rising as Israel continues with all of its illegal measures, in particular its settlement activities in all manifestations. In this regard, we reiterate our condemnation of the Israeli decision to confiscate 4,000 dunums of Palestinian land in the Bethlehem area, the largest seizure of Palestinian land in more than two decades, under the guise of declaring it "state land". Moreover, we reiterate our demand that the occupying Power rescind this decision, which is illegal and in total contradiction to the two-State solution on the basis of the pre-1967 borders, destroying what is left of the viability of this solution, and demand that Israel cease all of its settlement activities in the Occupied State of Palestine. We also draw attention to the continuing provocations and incitement by Israeli settlers and extremists, including at Al-Aqsa Mosque compound in Occupied East Jerusalem, and reiterate our warnings of the many grave dangers in this regard.

At the same time, we must draw the international community's attention to the ongoing Israeli military raids throughout the West Bank and the arrest and detention of hundreds more Palestinians civilians, in addition to the hundreds arrested during the months of July and August. In the past two weeks, more than 300 Palestinians civilians have been arrested by the Israeli occupying forces, with another 22 Palestinians in Occupied East Jerusalem detained just yesterday, including children as young as 12, 13 and 14 years of age. Currently, more than 6,000 Palestinians are being held in the occupying Power's prisons, enduring torture, abuse and horrific conditions of captivity. In this regard, on 9 September, a Palestinian man, Raed Al Jaa'bari, age 35, died after beatings endured while in an Israeli prison, including several blows to the head, adding to the list of Palestinian victims of the ruthless and illegal Israeli prison system.

Excessive, indiscriminate force also continues to be routinely employed by the Israeli occupying forces against the Palestinian civilian population, causing wilful death and injury in grave violation of international humanitarian law. Lethal force continues to be used, in particular against civilians peacefully protesting against the occupation, including against the settlements and the wall. Another victim of such force was a 16-year-old Palestinian boy, Mohammed Sinokrot, who died on 7 September of wounds sustained when he was shot by the Israeli occupying forces in Occupied East Jerusalem in earlier clashes. Also, on 10 September, occupying forces shot and killed 23-year-old Issa Al-Qatari at Al-Ama'ari refugee camp near Ramallah.

In the light of all of these ongoing Israeli violations, we reiterate our appeal to the international community, including the Security Council, to act responsibly to address this grave crisis throughout the Occupied State of Palestine, including the terrible humanitarian disaster that persists in Gaza. Collective action must be taken to uphold international law and to give meaning to the many relevant United Nations resolutions that remain unimplemented, including the adoption of practical measures to compel Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its violations and crimes and abide by its legal obligations, without exception.

Ending impunity is imperative for addressing this injustice being suffered by the Palestinian people, for addressing the immediate humanitarian needs, and for salvaging the dim prospects for peace. This is also imperative for creating the conditions necessary for the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive solution to the conflict as a whole, a solution long overdue and as urgent as ever. In this regard, I draw attention to the resolutions adopted in Cairo on 7 September 2014 by the foreign ministers of the League of Arab States, and the support given to the Palestinian initiative to seek a Security Council resolution delineating a time frame for an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967, on the basis of the long-standing parameters enshrined in United Nations resolutions, the Madrid principles, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Quartet road map. We will continue to seek the broadest support for these efforts in order to expedite bringing a definitive end to this illegitimate 47-year military occupation of the Palestinian land and achieve the rights and freedom unjustly denied to the Palestinian people.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 521 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 2 September 2014 (A/ES-10/656-S/2014/646), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed against the Palestinian people. Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable, and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations